

VISITOR Visa Information

B-1: The B-1 category is appropriate for aliens who wish to come to the U.S. to engage in temporary commercial, business, or professional activities related to their employment or business abroad, provided that the U.S. activity does not constitute “employment” in the U.S. This visa category may be used, for example, to consult with business associates, participate in scientific, educational, professional or business conventions, conferences or seminars, or undertake independent research.

B-2: The B-2 category is appropriate for aliens who wish to come to the U.S. temporarily for pleasure [...legitimate activities of a recreational character, including tourism, amusement, visits with friends or relatives, rest, medical treatment, and activities of a fraternal, social, or service nature.” 22CFR 41.31(b)(2)]. NOTE: Although it is possible to enter the U.S. on a B-2 visa for the purpose of being a “prospective student,” it is not recommended as the process to change to a student visa can be lengthy and the change of status to a student visa is by no means guaranteed. Additionally, a person may not begin studying until the visa status has been changed to a student visa category.

THE VISA WAIVER PROGRAM (VWP): Citizens of participating countries may be able to travel to the U.S. for business (WB) or tourism (WT) for 90 days or less without obtaining a U.S. visa. Pre-approval for VWP travel is now **required** through the Electronic System for Travel Authorization (ESTA). Please go to <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov/> no less than 24 hours prior to departure for VWP approval. The Visa Waiver countries are Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, San Marino, Singapore, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan and United Kingdom. If admitted to the U.S on the VWP, the same restrictions of the B-1/B-2 category apply.

CONSIDERATIONS:

	B-1/WB	B-2/WT
Employment	Not permitted	Not permitted
Reimbursement for expenses/per diem	Permitted for “reasonable” expenses	Not permitted
Honorariums	Permitted for “a usual academic activity or activities”*	Permitted for “a usual academic activity or activities”*
Study	Not permitted	Not permitted

* “Any alien admitted under section 101(a)(15)(B) may accept an honorarium payment and associated incidental expenses for a usual academic activity or activities (lasting not longer than 9 days at any single institution), as defined by the Attorney General in consultation with the Secretary of Education, if such payment is offered by an institution or organization described in subsection (p)(1) and is made for services conducted for the benefit of that institution or entity and if the alien has not accepted such payment or expenses from more than 5 institutions or organizations in the previous 6-month period. (INA 212(q)).”